

Serial No.: 09/655,498

16

PD-200114

**REMARKS**

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for considering the present application. In the Office Action dated April 7, 2004, Claims 1-80 are pending in the application. The allowance of Claims 4, 5, 9-19, and 22-80 is noted. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the rejection of Claims 1-3, 6-8, and 20-21 in view of the amendments to the independent claims and the following remarks.

Claims 1-3, 6-8 and 20-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Seligsohn* (WO95/104407) in view of *Ames* (5,233,626).

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the communication signals that are transmitted between the user terminal and at least two of the stratospheric platforms concurrently are both separate and different.

The *Seligsohn* reference, as the Examiner correctly states, fails to disclose communicating separate communication signals between the user terminal and at least two of the stratospheric platforms concurrently. The *Ames* reference is directed to a repeater diversity spread spectrum communication system that, as mentioned in lines 6-9, state that the system is for multi-path propagation. The multi-path propagation refers to transmitting the exact same signal through a number of various copies of the transmitted signal that arrive at a receiver with various time delays. The *Ames* reference specifically teaches how to combine such signals. Thus, the *Ames* reference teaches that the same signal is transmitted and reassembled back at a receiver. Claims 1, 6 and 20 have been amended to recite that the communication signal is both separate and different. Because the *Ames* system is directed to multi-path propagation, no suggestion or teaching is provided for separate and different signals. Applicants therefore respectfully request the Examiner for reconsideration of this rejection as well.

Likewise, Claims 1, 3, 7, 8, and 21 are also believed to be allowable since they are dependent upon allowable independent claims.

Claim 68 has been amended to correct a typographical error.


In view of the preceding remarks and changes, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims presently pending in this application are allowable. Therefore, entry and consideration of this response, reconsideration of the rejections, and allowance are respectfully requested. If the Examiner feels that a telephone interview will advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

Serial No.: 09/655,498

17

PD-200114

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